

### **Amendments to the Specification**

Please replace paragraph [0063] with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 5 is a view similar to Fig. ~~[[1]]~~6 showing a state wherein the lever has been rotated whereby the ball valve is opened and in which the sleeve is unable to move from its has been moved to the locking position to prevent the male coupler from disengaging from the female coupler; ~~[[and]]~~

Please add the following paragraph after paragraph [0063]:

Fig. 6 is a view similar to Fig. 1 showing a state wherein the male and female couplers have been engaged each other and the sleeve has been moved to the locking position; and

Please replace paragraph [0082] with the following amended paragraph:

The operation control means 44 includes a stop member 45 fixedly attached to the large diameter portion 37 of the operation tube 37 by bolts 47 and extending rearwards; and an engaging portion 46 of the lever 10 formed at a proximal end of the lever 10 and extending in a direction opposite to that in which the distal end thereof extends. When the female coupler 1 is, as shown in FIG. 1, disengaged from the male coupler 2 and, thus, the sleeve 24 is at its rear position and the valve operation lever 10 is at the position as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 to position the ball valve 5 at its closing position, the stop member 45 is close to the engagement portion 46 of the lever 10 so that the lever cannot be rotated from the above-stated position, whereby the ball valve 5 is kept closed. When the female coupler 1 is, as shown in Fig. ~~[[5]]~~6, connected to the male coupler 2, the sleeve 24 is moved to the advanced position to hold the locking balls 22 in the annular groove 64 of the male coupler 2 and, thus, the stop member 45 is moved forwards away from the engagement portion 46 of the lever 10 so that the lever 10 is allowed to rotate to the position as shown Fig. 5, so as to position the ball valve 5 at its opening position. When the lever 10 is held at the position shown in Fig. 5, the tip end of the engagement portion 46 is directed forwards and positioned adjacent to the stop member 45, so that the sleeve 24 cannot be moved rearwards from the advanced position shown in Fig. 5 to the retracted position shown in Fig. ~~[[1]]~~6, whereby the locking balls 22 are not allowed to move radially from the annular groove 64 of the

male coupler 2 and, thus, the female coupler 1 cannot be disengaged from the male coupler 2. The female coupler is permitted to be disconnected from the male coupler 2 only when the lever 10 has been turned 90 degrees from the position shown in Fig. 5 to the position shown in Fig. [[1]]6, so that the ball valve 5 is positioned at its closing position.